

THE FUGITIVES,

A Sheaf of Verses

By

H. L. SPENCER.



St. John, N. B.

JOHN A. BOWES.

1909.

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A SHEAF OF VERSES," by H. L.
SPENCER there were printed but five hun-
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69

John A. Bowes

Publisher.



AUTHOR'S NOTE.

Many of these poems have been afloat in the newspapers, magazines and anthologies, for more than half a century. They have been so kindly received by the press and the public that the Author feels that in this form they may commend themselves to his friends to whom they are most respectfully inscribed.

H. L. S.

St. JOHN, N. B., December, 31st, 1908.





Yours Sincerely
H. H. Bennett

HIRAM LADD SPENCER.

It is the fate of many men of undoubted literary genius to fail of that public recognition which is their due. Had Hiram Ladd Spencer devoted his attention to literature as earnestly as did some of his great New England contemporaries, his fame, if it did not equal theirs, would at least have been secure, and his name inscribed upon the honor roll of an era which produced writers who are today without legitimate successors. In April of this year (1909), Mr. Spencer will have attained the age of four-score, and at no time has he written articles of greater human interest than those brief sketches contributed during the last year or so by the Ingle Nook Philosopher of Kennebecasis Bay to the daily press of St. John. In these he lives in the past, and with the skill of an artist whose hand has not lost its cunning, paints word pictures, which may indeed present a sombre hue, but which possess a singular fascination for the thoughtful and receptive mind. The imagination of the poet, tempered by the knowledge and experience of a long and somewhat troubled life, invests his writings with a never-failing charm. He is, moreover, master of a style that is marked by simplicity and purity of diction, influenced doubtless by long and close familiarity with the work of the great masters of the English tongue. Mr. Spencer has, withal, a keen sense of humor, and presents phases of character and quaint situations with a delicacy of touch that is altogether delightful. It is greatly to be regretted that so much of his work has been fugitive, and somewhat carelessly thrown into the mass of words that makes up modern journalism. New Bruns-

Hiram Ladd Spencer.

wick is certainly not a promising field for the aspirant for literary honors, and Mr. Spencer has been to a large extent the victim of his environment, and of his mediums of expression. Thousands of readers who have been charmed and moved by his writings did not know the author's name, for his prose sketches were never signed; and there has even been a dispute as to the authorship of his most famous poem, "A Hundred Years to Come," whose pathos and haunting melody have made it one of the immortals in the realms of American verse. It is a singular and not less melancholy fact that he who was the classmate of Henry Cabot Lodge, Redfield Proctor and others of like fame, and who was born into that coterie of literary geniuses whose works have been the crowning glory of New England, should have failed to scale the heights, and now, far from the home of his kindred should look in loneliness upon the wintry scene spread out before his window by the shores of Kennebecasis Bay. Yet he is not alone. For fancy brings to his side again the forms of long ago, and he hears once more the murmur of voices long since lost in eternal silence. He himself nears the border of the realms of shadow and of silence, but some of that which he has written will survive, and tell to coming generations that here passed a poet soul, leaving to his fellows something of the vision which he had seen along the ways of life.

Hiram Ladd Spencer was born at Castleton, Vermont, on April 28th, 1829, and there received his education. His early life was spent in a period marked by great literary activity, and his imaginative mind received indelible impressions. For a time he taught school, and at one time in his life was engaged in commercial pursuits, which took him to the southern states in antebellum days, and to these provinces and Newfoundland in the period during the latter part of the civil war. He

Hiram Ladd Spencer.

had begun to write in the early forties, and became a contributor to the Knickerbocker, Sartain's and Graham's Magazines. Later he wrote for the New York Tribune and Post, and the Boston Journal. Mr. Spencer was editor of the Rutland (Vt) Herald in 1850,

Mr. Spencer became a resident of St. John in 1863 and was engaged for several years in business pursuits. For a time he edited the Maritime Monthly, an excellent magazine, but which was too ambitious for that period in this province. He then entered upon daily newspaper work, and for years was a valued member of the staff of the St. John Telegraph and Sun, and later of the Record and Gazette.

During this period he conducted general correspondence for other papers. This work was chiefly associated with the news of the day, although portions of it were purely literary in character and marked by genuine ability and great charm of expression. Mr. Spencer's few publications were :—Poems, (1848) ; Summer Saunterings Away Down East, (1850) ; A Song of the Years, and a Memory of Acadia, (1889) ; and a small volume of poems at a later period. A year or two since he retired to the home of a friend at Whitehead, Kings county, where he has conducted a little store, and during his long hours of leisure has contributed charming sketches to the daily press.

The Boston Globe last year asked for information concerning Mr. Spencer, and printed a portrait and a sketch of his life, and some of his best known poems. It is a high tribute to him that in an English book of selected poems, all of the highest class, issued some years ago, there is found one from the pen of Mr. Spencer. His poems are of value not merely for their fine sentiment and graceful form, but for that which they suggest, and

Hiram Ladd Spencer.

which in many cases is quite foreign to the lines. He himself once said :— "If my verses embodied nothing but words I would think they did not amount to much."

The following reminiscence is quoted from an article written by Mr. Spencer in November, 1908, which was published in the St. John Evening Times, and relates to his early boyhood :—

"About this time I began to think how I would employ myself in the years to come if I should chance to escape the fate of our neighbor and live to the great age of my grandfather when he died, for I was 'puny' and it had been decided that I would never be equal to the hardships of manual labor. I thought long and finally called in three boys of about my own age for consultation. They were Stephen Griswold, (he afterwards married Nancy and was happy,) Pliny Cheever and Newell Hooker. Cheever was "puny" like myself, was very quiet and had a great love for books. We talked long, earnestly and soberly. Hooker decided that he would go West, and he did so a few years later ; Griswold that he would stay on his father's farm, (he was an only son,) and he did so with Nancy for a partner ; and Cheever and I that we would write books, as we were good for nothing else.

"It was decided that we would get a large blank book which each of us should have in his possession a week at a time, during which he should write in it a story, essay or poem, and that once a month we would meet to read and criticise our various productions. Hooker and Griswold did not aspire to 'literary eminence,' but cooperated with Cheever and me for encouragement. Cheever was very ambitious and wrote what I thought fine stories, and verse hardly inferior to Byron's, but his health declined rapidly, and a year after we set out in

Hiram Ladd Spencer.

the pursuit of fame and fortune he died, and that great book of ours reposed on the top shelf in my book case. Had poor Cheever lived I am sure he would have been heard of; he was the most patient and brightest of us all. Later I wrote anonymously, both in prose and 'alleged verse,' in the village newspaper, and after a time secured a position on the more pretentious county newspaper, which I retained for a number of years. The history of Rasselas, by Dr. Johnson, is but the story of human life. 'Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.'"

A. M. BELDING.



CONTENTS.

I.—The Fugitives.

	Page
A Hundred Years to Come	19
Astray	21
By the Sea	23
S. S., 1873	25
Retrospection	27
To-morrow	29
The Land of Dreams	30
A Sea Dream	31
My Lady	33
Where?	34
Belgo	35
Why?	37
A Farewell	39
An Invocation	41
An Epitaph	42
Ahemed Mused	43
Haunted	45
Stanzas	46
The Cricket	47
One Walked the World	48
The King's Message	49
And Nothing More	52
The Silent City	53
Canada	55
Wrecks	56
Days Long Ago	57
Green Sleeves	59
Lost Children	61
The Saint John	63
May 18	65
In Winter	67
The World's Way	68
In Edentown	69

Contents.

	Page
Time	70
The Sunset Road	71
Only a Leaf	72
Beyond the Sunset	73
A Dead Poet	75
Fair Canada	77
The Years	79
The Cliffs of Grand Manan	81
The Blue Jay	83
A Regret	85
The City of Nowhere	87
After Death	89
Yesterday	91
From the Hereafter	92
A Vision	93
Whither	94
After a Time	96
The Harvest	97
Where Cow Bells Ring	99
Threnody	100
Who Planted the Flowers	103
The Owl	105
After Awhile	106
My Little Maid of Acadie	107
Questions... ..	109
Under the Snow	111
In Childhood	112
Ad Extremum	113
Nothing to Us	116
The City of Sleep	118
My Little Girl With the Golden Hair	120
A Hundred Years Ago	123
Who Can Control His Fate	125
An Old Song	127
An Autumn Walk	129
The Lighthouse Light	131
At Fernhill	132
The Dying Year	133
The First Snow	135
Have I Done Well	137
A Prophecy	138

Contents.

II.—Sonnets.

	Page
A quaint inscription	141
Upon the beach I walked	142
When Enon died	142
So you and I with all our joys and sorrows	143
It may be thought my life hath been of sorrow	144
In years ago	145
Where is the King	145
Upon the shivering fields the snow falls down	146
What is our life	147
A quiet valley	148
The leaves grow green on every shrub and tree	149
The dove returns unto its parv it nest	150
Watched by the stars	150
The twilight shadows creep along the wall	151
In the dim distance	152
A stately castle in my dreams I planned	153
Again I dreamed	153
I dream no more of castle or of tomb	154
With eyes suffused and heart dissolved with sorrow	155
Who builded here this snow architrave	156
From quiet dreams thou biddest me arise	156
While I forgotten by the world will lie	157
Sweet were the songs that thou didst sing	158
To-day a captive—yesterday a King	159
O Sea, that to these gray and solemn shores	159
They come again	160
Another mile stone on life's broad highway	161
No matter if we rest, where all is quiet,	162
The forest stream is choked with yellow leaves	162
May be when that which we call life is over	163
Look at the fragrant fields	164
The earth is red, and from her bosom cries	165
A mountain stream was from its channel turned	165
Hast thou the tender eyes and golden hair	166
Thou wert beside me when this song began	167
If love were love, 'twere sweet for love to live	168
Tost by the wind, from its paternal bough	168
But for the sunshine and the shades of night,	169
Let us go hence! The winter is at hand	170
The woods grow dark	171
A while ago how green the fields and woods	171
The flowers of spring will never ope again	172



I

The Fugitives.

A HUNDRED YEARS TO COME.



HERE, where will be the birds that sing,

A hundred years to come ?

The flowers that now in beauty spring,

A hundred years to come ?

The rosy cheek, the lofty brow,

The heart that beats so gaily now ?

Where, where will be our hopes and fears,

Joy's pleasant smiles and Sorrow's tears,

A hundred years to come ?

Who'll press for gold this crowded street,

A hundred years to come ?

Who'll tread yon aisles with willing feet,

A hundred years to come ?

Pale, trembling Age and fiery Youth,

And Childhood with its brow of truth ;

The rich, the poor, on land and sea ;

Where will the mighty millions be,

A hundred years to come ?

A Hundred Years To Come.

We all within our graves shall sleep,

A hundred years to come !

No living soul for us will weep

A hundred years to come.

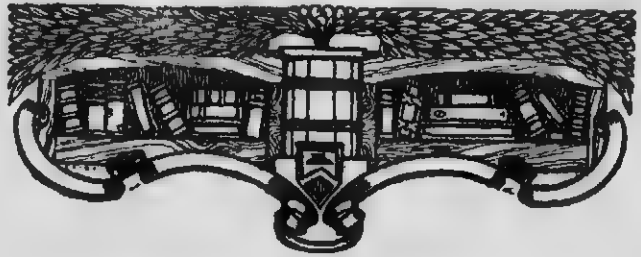
But others then our lands will till,

And others then our homes will fill,

And other birds will sing as gay,

And bright the sun shine as to today,

A hundred years to come.



ASTRAY.



UT through the daisied meadows,
And out through the breezy woodlands,
And up by the willowy brookside

My heart a wandering goes ;
But, ah, for the daisied meadows,
And ah, for the breezy woodlands,
And ah, for the willowy brookside,
And alas, for the winter snows !

For my eyes see not what they saw once,
And my heart feels not what it felt once :—
I walk with the staff of a pilgrim,
And my steps are weary and slow ;—
For those that I loved have forgotten
The guest that comes unbidden,
A ghost of the days departed,—
A shadow of long ago.

Astray.

The meadows are daisied and sunlit,
The woodlands are breezy and songful,
The brook murmurs on, 'neath the willows,
And the orchards are all ablaze ;
But I see not the nodding daisies,
And I hear not the songs of the woodland,—
The babbling brook is an ice thread,
And the orchard blossoms are snow.



BY THE SEA.



THROUGH the still night I lay
On a gray cliff that overlooked the Sea,
Whose breast no ripple stirred ;
And there, as wore away
The night, discoursed to me
In tones of melody,
A voice before unheard.

“ Dreamer of idle dreams !
Their lessons still rehearse,
The stars that shone when good alone
Did fill the universe ;
And still the Sea doth speak
As in the ages eld
She to the sages spake :
Over yon mountain peak,
Behold the moon doth break—
The moon that they beheld !

By the Sea.

"Doth the Sea roar?"

'Tis not that virtue dies ;

'Tis not for right o'erthrown

That darkness veils the skies !

By laws inscrutable,

All evil perisheth :

Good is immutable,

And knoweth naught of death."

Then my heart stirred within me,

and I cried,

"O Voice, O Voice, the grave is deep and
wide—

My soul for its beloved dead upon the rack
had died !"

Answered the Voice, "Behold the tender
flower,

Carefully guarded from the wintry blast ;

The reaper reapeth only at the hour

Appointed by the master." *Then the night
was past*

S. S. 1873.



RE long, ere long the flowers will blow,
Upon the turf that o'er thee lies,
And birds will sing as if of woe
There were no dwelling 'neath the skies.
Again to bloom the hills will wake,
The meadow and the shadowy leas—
The lilies dream on yon still lake,
And murmur soft the Summer Seas;
But sweetest songs and brightest dyes,
And days that come and days that go,
And tides that ebb and tides that flow,
To those that rest the turf below
Bring naught of pleasure or surprise.

Thou hast escaped the din and care
That vex the souls of pilgrims here ;
The fruitless struggle—the despair—
The longing vague—the haunting fear ;

S. S. 1873.

And yet we mourn since thou art not,
Though, questionless, 'tis well with thee,
And water with our tears the spot
Where thou dost sleep so tranquilly ;
But anguished sighs and bitter tears,
And days that come and days that go,
And tides that ebb and tides that flow,
Bring naught to thee of joy or woe,
Beyond the clash of hastening years.



RETROSPECTION



COME! sit by my side awhile, I pray,
And let us talk of the years gone by!
You grow wrinkled and I grow gray,
And sometimes I fancy our neighbors say—
“Those poor old souls! they are ready to
die.”

Ready to die! ah no, ah, no!
Never was sunshine more sweet to me;
Never were fairer flowers, I know,
Than those at our feet; and the airs that blow
Are laden with odors from over the sea.

Speak of the house where we were born!
Speak of our early hopes and fears!
Of the brook and the bridge and the berried
thorn—
Of the odorous orchard—the waving corn,
And check for awhile your rising tears!

Retrospection.

Where the old house stood grows the green,
green grass,

And the graves in the garden are quite
forgot ;

And they that down the wayside pass

Nod a good morning—alas, alas,

In the place of our birth they know us not !

Janie, my darling, lies buried here!

Janie, the sunshine of my young eyes !

The flowers have blossomed for many a year

O'er her neglected and nameless bier—

The sweet wild flowers that she used to
prize!

And we jog on ! but the edge of grief

Grows duller and duller, day by day !

We stand in the world as stands a sheaf

Of grain in the cornfield yonder—in brief,

We are ready to go, as our neighbors say.

TO-MORROW.



WITH outstretched arms I follow thee,
In sorrow,
To-Morrow !

But vainly, and thou laugh'st at me,
To-Morrow ! To-Morrow !
Ah me, to leave this shadowland,
Upon thy sunlit shore to stand.
Ah me, to clasp thy jewelled hand,
To-Morrow ! To-Morrow !

Thou beckonest, and I pursue,
In sorrow
To-Morrow !

Earth's falsest heart to thee is true,
To-Morrow ! To-Morrow !
But thou art falser than the wind—
A dream, vagary of the mind,
And they that seek thee never find,
To-Morrow ! To-Morrow !

THE LAND OF DREAMS.



FAREWELL, farewell, thou land of
Dreams,

Where Youth and I together dwelt ;
Could I, beside thy mystic streams
But feel once more as I have felt !
Could I by cliff and riverside,
By piney wood and mountain hoar,
Dream on, as in the days that have died
And feel as I shall feel no more !

Farewell, farewell, thou land of Dreams ?
The Dreamer sighs his last adieu ;
Mountains and vales and whispering streams,
Skies that were always bright and blue,
Can time or fortune e'er efface
The imprint of those blissful hours,
When this heart was Hope's dwelling place,
And every path was strewn with flowers !

A SEA DREAM.



Y the side of the sad-voiced Sea
In the twilight gloom I lie,
With the gray sky over me,
And the sentinel light-house nigh.

Afar o'er the waste are the ships
That the moonlight glances o'er,
And near me, with hungry lips,
The waves that lap the shore.

And I think of the ships that sail
Away in their lordly state,
From which come never a tale
Of good or evil fate.

And I think of the castles fair,
That we build by river and stream,
That melt away in the air
Like a dream, an idle dream.

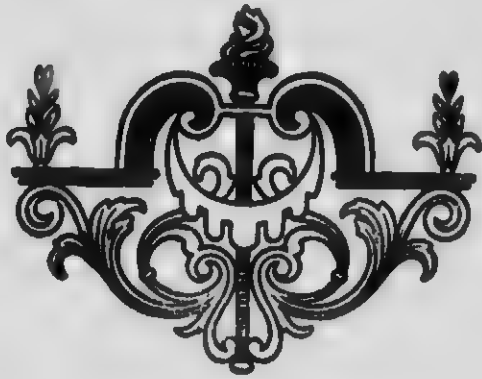
A Sea Dream.

Like the ships that never come back—

Like the leaves borne off by the tide—

Like the meteor's lightning track—

Like the rose that has bloomed and died.



MY LADY.



HE rose that blushed upon my lady's
breast,

Has lost its fragrance and is cast aside ;

The songs that yesterday she loved the best

Have not today a note she can abide :

We are most variable—my lady, we

Are as inconstant as the treacherous sea.

To-day my lady robes herself in white,

To-morrow, as a fawn her garb is brown ;

Again, in black she walks, the queen of night,

Her flowing hair all gathered in a crown :

Tell me, my lady, which the greater task,

To change your dresses or to change your
mask ?

It matters little, and 'twere idle quite,

My lady, of our humors to complain ;


To him that labors blessed is the night,

In sultry August blessed is the rain,

And so, my lady, I'm inclined to bless

Your various masks, your wondrous store
of dress.

WHERE?

HE highway leads through fields of green
And valleys odorous of flowers :
Above our heads the willows lean,
And birds with song beguile the hours :
The highway leads through scenes most fair.
But, Pilgrim, canst thou tell me, Where?

The highway leads by rock and glen,
Through mountain gorge and desert wild,
By deep morass and tangled fen,
O'er crag on crag stupendous piled,
Till weary, sinking in despair,
With clasped hands, we question, Where?

The highway leads unto the Sea,
The Sea that man hath ne'er re-croft :
And here it ends! ah me, ah me,
For days of sunshine, wasted, lost!
Oh, Sea, our barques in safety bear
O'er thy expanse! but Where, oh Where?

BELGO.



EARS, years have rolled away since when
I roamed, a thoughtless child,
Through Belgo's wood, and vale, and
glen,

And o'er her mountains wild ;
Years, years whose history no tongue
Or pen may ever tell,—
Years, wasted years, unvoiced, unsung,
And if forgotten, well.

I mind me of the brooks that met
The bridge of stone below ;
With fairy forms I people yet
The valleys where they flow ;
I mind me of the road that wound
The daisied hills among—
The castled rock—the haunted ground—
The songs my playmates sung.

Bilgo.

The mountains blue ! What courtly trains
Rode o'er their grassy slope !
What castles rose with pictured panes
In every vale and copse !
I question as the past I scan
With mingled grief and joy,
Why every boy would be a man,
And every man a boy.



WHY?



E lay asleep in the twilight gray,
And a little child sobbed the night away--

*"Break, break, O heart, and let me
die ;"*

But morning came, as come it will,
With its dewy flowers and birds that trill,

*"And why should we weep ?" she said, Ah,
why ?*

They laid him down in his long, last sleep
In a quiet nook by the sounding deep--

"Break, break, O heart, and let me die";

But ere the dews of a month were shed,

The green grass waved above his head,

*"And why should we weep ?" she said, Ah,
why ?*

WHY?

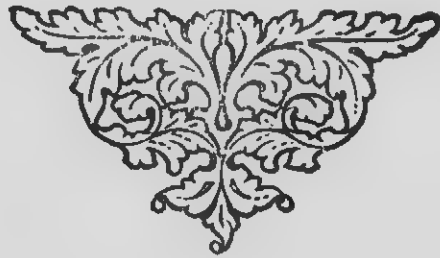
She thought how Sorrow had been his friend,
She thought how to Fate he would not bend—

"Break, break Oh heart, and let me die ;"


She thought how quiet his rest must be

In that pleasant nook by the side of the sea,

*"And why should we weep, she said, Ah,
why ?"*



A FAREWELL.

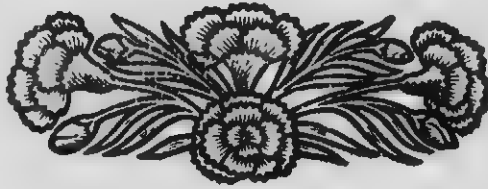
LOW, gently flow,
Where violets blow,
Thou wild, enchanted river ; -
I've listened long
To thy sweet song,
But now farewell forever.

In thy green dells
Thy purple bells
In spring-time bloom, sweet river ;
And on thy breast
That hath no rest,
The sunbeams glance and quiver.

But by thy side
At eventide,
As in time dead forever,
It may not be
To roam, ah me,
My own, my mountain river.

A Farewell.

Yet gently flow
Where violets blow,
Thou wild, enchanted river,
Through all my dreams
Thy music streams—
Through all my dreams forever.



IN INVOCATION.



SOFTLY blow, ye Summer winds—
Softly, O, ye branches wave—
Gently flow, thou stream that wends

By this lonely grave.
Here in dreamless slumber lies
One that was the world to me,—
Voiceless lips and tearless eyes—
Heart from anguish free !

Nevermore to buffet fate—
Nevermore for rest to pray—
Nevermore to watch and wait
For a happier day !
Softly blow, ye Summer winds—
Softly, O, ye branches, wave—
Gently flow, O stream that wends
By this nameless grave.

AN EPITAPH.



STRANGER, pause and drop a tear
Over him that slumbers here,
Pause and think, for like him, lo !
Thou to Nature's waste must go.

He, as thou, did nourish hope ;
He, as thou, with fear did cope ;
He, as thou, did trouble borrow
From the phantom-peopled morrow.

He, as thou, did sometimes say
The world will miss me when away ;
But who in all the world can tell
His name, or where he chanced to dwell ?

But if to men his name were known—
If round the globe his fame were blown,
Think'st thou 'twould give his slumber zest,
With the green turf above his breast ?

AHEMED MUSED.



HEMED mused as he the prophets
read,—
“The living live,—our lost ones—are
they dead?

“No whisper comes across the silent sea,

“The hills beyond are always hid from me!

“Death means a dreamless sleep! Is that the
fate

“Of those who leave us, bowed and desolate?

“God knows, and in his knowledge I will
rest—

“What is must be for humankind the best.”

Ahemed Mused.

Ahemed's ashes fill a nameless grave,
Perhaps on hillside lone, perhaps beside the
wave ;

But for Ahemed's soul I'm sure there is
No dreamless sleep, but everlasting bliss.



HAUNTED.



IN heaven's broad waste are stars a gleam—
O'er graves forgotten are flowers
abloom—

And a dream of this, and of that a dream,
Star-like and flower-like haunt my room ;

Dreams of friends that never come back—

Dreams of dreams that were buried of yore,
Dreams of joys whose lightning track
Is mossed by the sods of sorrow o'er.

Come to my chamber, dreams, no more !

Die as the day dies! Heart of mine,
Eve wears not the garb that morning wore,
And the common fate of the world is thine.

STANZAS.



WHENEVER I see a red, red rose
I say, "Mayhap from some heart it
sprung,

That moulders beneath, whose cares and woes
Were never voiced by mortal tongue!"

And whenever I see a violet pale,
By hedge or woodside, I think, "Ah me,
Of its mother heart, how sweet the tale
Of deathless love and trust might be!"

For it is a fancy of mine, that rise
From buried hearts an emblem true ;
That in every flower that buds and dies
The lost and the dead their lives renew.

THE CRICKET.



HITHER and thither the pendulum swings
And the shadow journeys along the wall ;
Dreaming—to me the robin sings
Of flowery meadow, of mossy springs,
Of a thousand, thousand beautiful things ;—
But, waking, I hear the cricket only,—
The black-robed cricket that harps of the
fall.

Hither and thither the sunbeams glance ;
The winds are freighted with odours sweet ;
White clouds float through the blue expanse,
And roses blossom around my feet ;
For a moment only, the blissful trance ;—
Still creeps the shadow along the wall ;—
I hear the chirp of the cricket only ;
The hermit cricket, sedate and lonely,
That by the hearthstone harps of the fall.

ONE WALKED THE WORLD



NE walked the world with downcast head,
And on his heart his hand he wore.
"I trust no more in man," he said,
"In woman, nevermore!"
He died! forgotton ere he died,
And no one wept and no one sighed.

One walked the world with kingly tread!
"The world is faithful and true," said he,
"But if it is faithless and false," he said,
"Faithless and false I, too, can be!"
And so he lived and so he died,
And a willow was planted his grave beside.

THE KING'S MESSAGE.



HE king lay in his palace
In a far-off Eastern city,
And the winds breathed through his lattices
O'erladen with perfume ;
His couch was soft and silken,
His carpets like the sea foam,
And lamps of pearly radiance
Dispelled the midnight gloom.

The king lay in his palace,
While stood at every portal
A trusted, stalwart servitor,
That never foe came nigh ;
But how it was I know not,
There came a silent messenger,
And whispered in the king's ear,
" 'Tis thine, O king, to die."

The King's Message.

The heart of the king grew faint,
For life was very precious;—
The heart of the king grew faint;—
“To die, to be no more !
To drift into the silence,
The shadows and the darkness,
As a ruderless ship drifts seaward,
And never finds a shore !”

But then the messenger added—
“Thou shalt live, O king, forever ;—
Thou shalt live in the flowers and the
grasses ;
Thou shalt live in the fruit and the grain ;
Thou shalt sleep on the breast of beauty,
In the rose or the carnation—
Thou shalt gladden the hearts of thou-
sands—
Thou shalt not live in vain !”

“Is it not better to live thus,
By human woes untrammelled ?
Answer, O king, and tell me,
Preferest thou the Now or Then,

The King's Message.

When thy glorious fate it may be,
To live through all the ages—
Through all the countless ages,
In the hearts and minds of men?"

The king turned on his pillow,
And sank in peaceful slumber,—
Through realms of bliss his fancy
Unchecked, went wandering free ;
And 'tis told throughout his Kingdom
That while he lived thereafter,
A wiser and a better
And a happier king was he.



AND NOTHING MORE.



He mused by mossy rock and rill—
He dreamed by cliff and tide-washed
shore,

Did good to some—to no one ill
And nothing more.

And nothing more! What more do men
Whose hearts in strife grow sick and sore
Who frame deceit with lip and pen,
And nothing more?

Some sneered and said, "A dreamer this,
Versed only in unfruitful lore."
He surely pitied them I wis,
And nothing more.

He died, as every man must die—
(‘Twas in the goodly days of yore,)
You question where his ashes lie,
And nothing more,—

THE SILENT CITY.



H, Silent City, unprofaned
By greed of gain or hurrying feet!
All human passions here are chained;
Thy dwellers, one and all, have gained
The boon of slumber, soft and sweet

No more by Fortune's frown perplexed—
No more by faithless friends undone:—
The years roll on by ill unvexed—
As is today will be the next—
Their peace is perfect—every one.

Who heeds the storms that sweep the sea?
Who heeds the wrecks that strew the shore?
Who heeds thy blasts, Adversity?
The poison shafts of calumny?
The weary load that once he bore?

The Silent City.

Not one of all the dwellers here!—

No evil dreams their rest invade!

For Yesterday there falls no tear—

And for Tomorrow comes no fear:—

Alike to all are sun and shade.

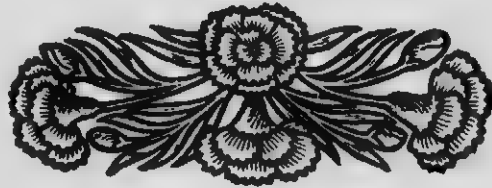
The weary here their weariness

Have into gray oblivion cast;

The griefs that did the soul oppress,

The world's vast waste of loneliness,

Are with the unreturning Past.



CANADA.



AIR land of mountain, lake and stream,
Of forests green through all the year;
Of valleys that Arcadian seem;
Of homes that love and plenty cheer!
No other land could be so dear,
'Neath all the overarching skies;
And doubly blest is he who here
Contented lives—contented dies.

WRECKS.



WE left our footprints in the snow
As in the fields we walked lang syne;
You said, "Sometime the world shall know
How deep this love of thine and mine:—
You said, "The world shall sometime know,"—
While we were walking in the snow.

You said, when by our pathway sprung
The mayflower and the violet pale,
"The ills of which the bards have sung
Are but the ills of those who fail:—
And those who fail," you said to me,
"In life's great fight, unworthy be."

So be it! let the world go on!
Of wrecks it has a many score;
But sunlight in, or moonlight wan,
I fancy on a brighter shore
Sometime these wrecks shall drift, and be
Untroubled more by storm or sea.

DAYS LONG AGO.



IN the woods the Arbutus is budding again
And again by the brookside the Alder
Tongues blow,
And nursed by the sunshine and fed by the rain
Soon the Violets will blossom where late
lay the snow:—
Where late lay the snow! O, the days long
ago!—
It was pleasant to live in the days long ago.

In the woods there is freedom from hectoring
care,
Where man talks with Nature, and Nature
with man,
Who has on his shoulders no burdens to bear,
No object to court and no object to ban!
O, the days that we knew, that no more we
shall know!—
It was pleasant to live in the days long ago.

Days Long Ago.

O, the days long ago! the days long ago!
They'll return to us never, and never again!
The Mayflower will bud and the Violet blow,
And the Alder Tongue spring by the
brookside in vain,
For the older we grow the better we know
Life has nothing in store like the days long ago.



GREEN SLEEVES.



REEN leaves will come again,
Green leaves will come again,
Though the yellow leaves are falling
And the year is on its wane ;
But Green Sleeves with her tender eyes—
She will not come again.

The birds that in the orchard
Were wont to build and sing
Will come with the earliest whisper
Of the zephyrs of the spring:—
But Green Sleeves!—In the orchard
I shall not hear her sing.

I shall hear the pleasant murmur
Of the brook, 'twixt banks of fern,
And the tinkle, tinkle of the bells,
As home the cattle turn ;
But Green Sleeves! O Green Sleeves!
She never will return.

Green Sleeves.

Green Sleeves! Green Sleeve s!
My heart is racked with pain,
And often at a thought of you
My tears fall down like rain;
For Green Sleeves! Green Sleeves!
We shall not meet again.



LOST CHILDREN.



P from the misty lowlands,
Up to the Sunlit Hills!—
Had ye a warning, O Children,
To fly approaching ills?
Ye went in the early morning,—
Had ye a warning to flee
Away from the misty lowlands,
The wearisome world, and me?

I listen in vain for your prattle—
In vain for your laughter sweet!—
I watch in vain for your shimmering robes—
The flash of your flying feet!
For, O Children of my Childhood,
Whose absence I deplore,
Ye have gained the heights of the Sunlit Hills,
And will return no more.

Lost Children.

From the Sunlit Hills, O Children,
 No traveler e'er returns;
But as of old, my heart for you
 All day long, night long yearns!
O, Children of my Childhood!
 From life's temptations free!
Come back, if only in dreams come back!
 Once more come back, to me.



THE SAINT JOHN.



COME from the green pine forests,
Where nature runs wild and free,—
From the haunt of the moose, and deer,
and wolf,
To the gray and restless Sea.

I sing by cliffs grown hoary,
Where the echoes my songs repeat ;
By the woodland home of the pioneer,
And villages white and sweet.

And often I pause to dally
With the wheels of some busy mill ;—
O, the wheels go round, and round, and round
And their clatter is never still.

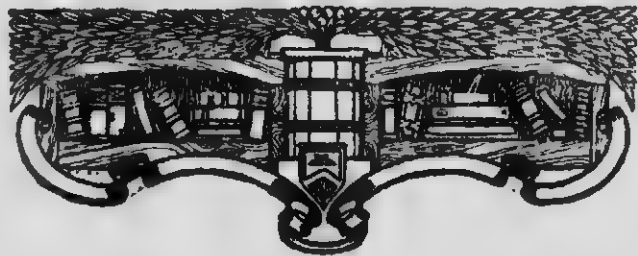
And along by meadows cool and green,
That are haunted by vagrant bees,

The Saint John.

And along by willow bordered banks,
And under shadowing trees.

I pause by the bustling city,
With its heavenward pointing spires,
And I sob at thought of the toilers there,
With their never quenched desires ;

Till at length my story is ended,
Far from the land of the pine ;—
Bend low—I would whisper a secret—
This story of mine is thine.



MAY 18.



HE noble men of Eighty three!
The dauntless and the bold!

A moment to their memory,
And the brave days of old!
The pioneers of bye-gone years;—
Their monument shall be
The noblest that their sons could raise—
This City by the Sea.

The sturdy men of Eighty-three!
Their daughters and their wives!
However dark the times might be,
Poetic were their lives.
They saw in dreams along these streams
The meadows broad expand,
And 'mong the trees fair villages
Spring up on every hand.

May 18.

The sturdy men of Eighty-three !
Their wives and children too !—
A moment to their memory—
At all times brave and true !
A line—there's need of nothing more—
On History's glowing page—
They left for those who follow them
A glorious heritage.



IN WINTER.



Y banks of snow the river winds,
And fields of ice, and forests brown,—
By islets still and greybeard cliffs,
And by the vexed and noisy town,
And joins the Sea whose waters roll,
As ages lapse, from pole to pole.

By paths on which the sunbeams fall,
Our feet are led ;—We question
Where ?—

By ways where doubt, distrust and fear
Our pilgrim comrades ever are,
Until at last we fall asleep
Beside the dim and shoreless deep.

THE WORLD'S WAY.



HAT matter if the year grows old ?

What matter if the leaves turn brown ?

What matter if the winds blow cold ?

What matter if the snows fall down,
If we have pockets lined with gold,
A country home, and a home in town ?

What matter if our neighbors shake

Under misfortune's angry frown ?

If they have naught to broil or bake—

Are clothed in tatters from sole to
crown?—

Why should we worry for their sake,

In our country home or our home in town ?

The gods do well and the gods do ill—

On these they smile and on those they
frown ;

'Tis not for us to baulk their will,

So long as they our pockets fill,

And give us homes in country and town.

IN EDENTOWN.



Y thoughts go gipsying away
Across the vapor crowded bay,
Across the hills so bleak and brown,
To the pleasant streets of Edentown.

And there among the boys am I ;—
The boys I knew in days gone by,
And spite of Time, and Care and Pain,
Behold, I am a boy again.

You sneer ! Your lip quite scornful curls !
I see again the peerless girls—
The girls whose beauty charmed all eyes
In that far distant Paradise.

Hold up the mirror ! Yes, I'm old !
My pulse beats slow—my blood runs cold ;
There is a bald spot on my crown ;—
Folly to dream of Edentown.

TIME.



TIME tapped my shoulder :—"What is
man ?

Said he, "whose life is but a span !
He builds—I shatter and behold,
A touch of mine, and he is old.

"Another touch, and lo, upsprings
The daisy from his dust, and sings
The cricket 'mid the grasses deep,
'Neath which he lies in dreamless sleep.

"Forgotten ? Aye, the world forgets
With cheerfulness its various debts !
Forgotten ! And what matter, say,
To rose or thorn of Yesterday !"

THE SUNSET ROAD.



WEARY grows the Sunset Road
That I once so bravely strode ; -
On my Mother's gentle breast
Lay me down for I would rest.

Little matter where I lie—
Sun's warm beam or cloudy sky,
Howl of wind or zephyr calm,
Roar of storm or breath of balm.

I have had my share, I know,
Of joy and sorrow here below ;
I nothing owe, I nothing claim
But slumber here, from whence I came.

I nothing owe! Ah, thou whose grace
Made beautiful each desert place,
Through which I've wandered—thee I
owe
More than thou can'st ever know.

ONLY A LEAF.



ONLY a leaf! but it speaks to me
Of a soul as pure as the souls above!
Only a leaf! but a history
It breathes in my ear of saintly love.
Only a leaf! To my dim eyes
It doth a chamber of death recall.
And a far away graveyard, where slum-
bering lies
One that was childhood's all in all.

BEYOND THE SUNSET.



BEYOND the Sunset lies a land, where
never

May age, infirmity or grief be known ;
Where time flows on as flows a peaceful
river —

Where friend meets friend, and never
feels alone.

About us here are many vacant places
Thickly the graveyards all with graves are
strown ;

Ah, where are they—the old, familiar faces?
The friends of happier years! Where have
they gone?

Beyond the Sunset! through whose misty
portals

We sometimes dream at eventide, that we
Catch loving glances from the bright im-
mortals

Who beckon to us o'er the Sunset Sea.

Beyond the Sunset.

"*Here* Summer reigns"—they tell us—"reigns
eternal;

Here flow the rivers of perpetual youth;
Here is the dwelling place of peace supernal--
Our gates are guarded by the sword of
truth.

"*There* change the seasons—*there* the tempest
rages—

Yours is the blighted and the broken tree;
Here is a balm that every grief assuages,
Beyond the Sunset—o'er the Sunset Sea."

There fades the twilight, and the shadows
darken—

The beckoning hands no longer I behold;
No voice is heard, howe'er intent we hearken,
For night has closed the Sunset gates
of gold.



A DEAD POET.



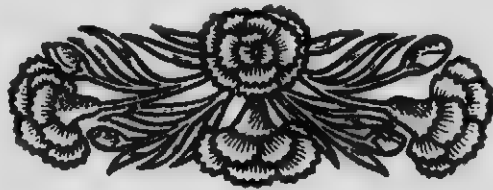
AGAINST my window pane
The melancholy rain
Taps all the long night through thy
finger,
While o'er thy charmed page,
O, poet, prophet, sage,
I dreaming linger.

Art thou a wandering ghost,
From some far distant coast?
Art thou a brother to the plains and
mountains?
Or walkest thou where blow
Celestial airs, and flow
Celestial fountains?

A Dead Poet.

The winds go moaning by ;—
There cometh no reply—
No answer to the question of the Ages—
 We only know what is :
 The Future holds, I wis,
Unwritten pages.

Against my window pane
The melancholy rain
Taps all the long night through with icy
 fingers,
 But wheresoe'er thou art,
 I know that near my heart
Thy spirit lingers.



FAIR CANADA.



FAIR Canada, Fair Canada !
Land of the rowan, larch and pine !
Fair Canada, Fair Canada !

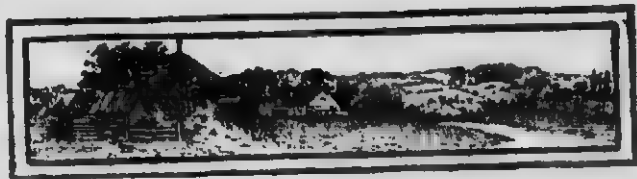
No other skies so blue as thine ;
The Southron boasts his Summer land
Where flowers through all the year
expand,
But even there could we forget
The mayflower and the violet ?
Fair Canada, fair Canada !

Fair Canada, fair Canada !
No other birds e'er sing like thine !
Fair Canada, fair Canada !
Thy breezes cheer like draughts of wine ;
And ah, the music of thy rills
That wander down a thousand hills,
And ah, the songs of many lands
The waves rehearse upon thy strands ;
Fair Canada, fair Canada !

Fair Canada.

Fair Canada, fair Canada !
Thy autumns yield a plenteous store !
Fair Canada, fair Canada !
Beloved of Heaven forevermore !
With wealth untold thy forests teem,
Each silvery lake and murmuring stream
If not of gold, of sweet content ;—
Ne'er better gift to man were sent ;
Fair Canada, fair Canada !

Fair Canada, fair Canada !
Thy noblest traits are yet untold !
Fair Canada, fair Canada !
Let some one sing thy hearts of gold !
Let some one sing thy hearts of gold !
Their truth, their trust, their faith unfold ;
Their constancy without a blot ;
Their loyalty that falters not !
Fair Canada, fair Canada.



THE YEARS.



COME back to me, the flowers that sprang
When you were young and I was young;
The birds that in the wildwood sang

When you were young and I was young,
They are not dead, those lovely flowers,
They are not lost, those pleasant hours,
They have not fled, those birds that sung
When you were young and I was young.

From wood and field a murmur comes—

“When you were young and I was young!”
By the willow trees the wild bee hums—

“When you were young and I was young,”
It is a fiction, brazen, bold ;
True hearts have never yet grown old ;—
Sing birds and bees the songs you sung,
For you are young and I am young.

The Years.

Just as they watched above our bed
When you were young and I was young,
Long hence they'll watch, the stars o'er head,
And the birds will sing the songs they sung ;
They'll watch o'er you and watch o'er me
And sing to us from shrub and tree,
Just as they watched, just as they sung,
When you were young and I was young.



THE CLIFFS OF GRAND MANAN.



WE have watched the stars for hundreds
of years,
And we are as young today
As when, unvexed by doubts or fears,
Champlain sailed up the bay.
Champlain is dust and his sword is rust;
And gone are the men of his time,
Like the breath of a breeze in the whispering
trees
Or a poet's idle rhyme.

We have seen the ships sail in and out
At midnight and at noon,
We have heard the drowning sailor's shout
And the fisherman's merry tune;
The fishermen, lo, they come and go,
And others their places fill,
But despite the rage of storm and age
We are firm and youthful still.

The Cliffs of Grand Manan.

And what are ye who boast of power,
And live as if life could last?
The plaything of a single hour,
A drop in an ocean vast!
While we o'er the sea eternally
Look out with tireless eyes:
To us an age is but as a page is
In the book of centuries.



THE BLUE JAY.



HE woods grew sere and the fields forlorn,
But here and there, 'mid the sheaves of corn
The blue jay flitted and chattered and sung
To the gray-haired man who then was
young;

"I've a little household down in the wood,
And corn for the children is very good":—
'Twas thus that the blue jay chattered and
sung.

Under the trees, on that autumn day,
Apples, golden and red-cheeked lay,
And the boy dropped down in the fragrant
grass—

The sky bent o'er like a sea of glass,
"You'll have to work some day like me,
And I hope as cheerful as I you'll be":—
'Twas thus that the blue jay chattered and
sung.

The Blue Jay.

Years passed, and he walked 'mid the
sheaves of corn,

With a feeble step and a look forlorn:

But the jay was there, and he chattered
and sung,

"Old man! I knew you when you were
young"

And you'd give for one hour that you
wasted here

Many and many an after year":—

"Twas thus that the blue jay chattered and
sang.



A REGRET.

THE yellow leaves are falling, falling, fall-
ing
And the flowers no more besprinkle the
meadows and the leas;
To the lingering bird the southward flying
birds are calling,
"Come away, away, away, to sunnier lands
than these!"
And I sit and think of the purple Spring
that's over,
Of the golden Summer that I never more shall
see,—
Of a time when my heart o'erflowed with
happiness, as the clover
O'erflows with honey, to be ravished by the
bee.
Ah, for the leaves, and ah, for the faded
flowers!

A Regret.

Ah for the birds whose joyous songs are o'er!

Ah, for the Springtime sweet—for Summer's sunny hours!

And oh, for the dreams of my youth that come
to my couch no more.



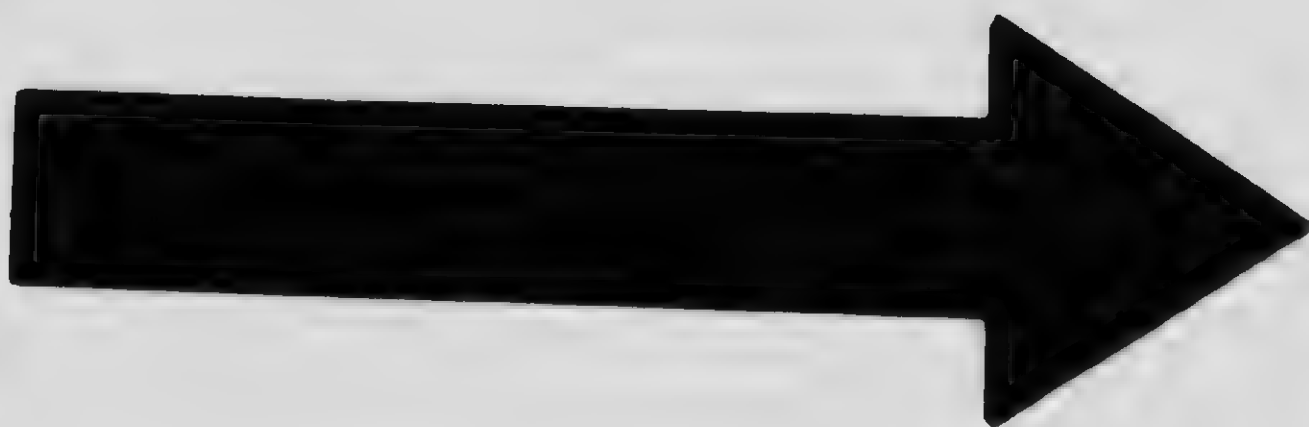
THE CITY OF NOWHERE.



BYOND the Ocean of Dreaming
The City of Nowhere lies,
With its gray old temples whose turrets
And towers invade the skies.

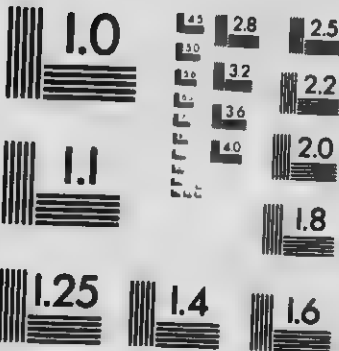
Not golden its streets but grass grown,
With oaks, elms and maples o'erhung;
And the birds are the birds of our childhood,
That carol their branches among.

In the streets of the City of Nowhere
They gather, the dear ones of old,
When over the ocean of dreaming
Comes sailing a mariner bold.
"What news from the land over yonder?—
"Why bless us, an old friend is he!"
"Come, shake off the burden you carry
And cast it back into the sea."



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

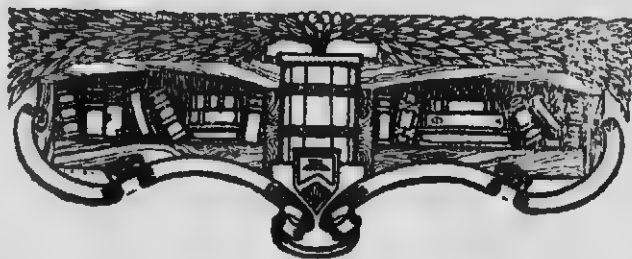


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The City of Nowhere.

O, the beautiful City of Nowhere,
O'er the Ocean of Dreams far away!
There no brow is furrowed with wrinkles—
There all the year round it is May;
But somehow, whenever we go there
The Fates, we're compelled to obey,
Always pilot us back, o'er the Ocean of Dreams,
To the land of Everyday.



AFTER DEATH.



HERE where I lie
The yellow leaves are falling,
And in the wood, near by,
Belated birds are calling,
Each unto each,—“ 'Tis time to be away—
The air grows frosty, and the sky grows gray.”

Here where I lie
The brown and withered grasses
Give sigh for sigh
To every breeze that passes:
Close by my pillow chirps the cricket drearily,
And by my feet the brooklet murmurs wearily.

Here where I lie
Comes never sound of labor,
And never nigh
Comes old time friend or neighbor;—
Why should they come? I bid thee tell me, why?
They live and more: a clod, inert, am I.

After Death.

Here where I lie
Is room for one beside me;
When thou shalt die
May Angels hither guide thee;—
No matter then how storm or tempest rages—
Peace will be ours through all the countless ages.



YESTERDAY.



HO looks with sad eyes into mine
When e'er I turn from things that be,
And whispers, "Pilgrim, mine and thine,
A sea divides a shoreless sea!"
O Yesterday! O Yesterday!
Come back to me! Come back to me!—
I threw thy proffered gifts away;—
O Yesterday! Come back to me!

The graves where hosts of ages dwell
Sleep through the slowly circling years,
No deeper are with poppies spread
Than thine, despite our sighs and tears!
O Yesterday! O Yesterday!
Come back to me! Come back to me,
A pilgrim in the world astray!
O Yesterday! Come back to me.

FROM THE HEREAFTER.



O you hear the howl of the winterwinds,
And the wail of the waves as they
lash the shore?

The patter of hail on the window blinds
And the clash of the storm by the close
shut door?

I nothing hear—the world seems still—
Restful and torpid; I only know
That far away on a wood crowned hill,
This is my first night under the snow.

Do you see the eyes of a well-loved child
Do you hear the voice that was always dear
Do you, waking, question in accents wild,
Why is he there, while I am here?
Then question not, for calm and deep
Is my rest as a peaceful river's flow;
For the dead, the living should never weep—
This is my first night under the snow.

A VISION.



IN spite of all that men have done—
In spite of all that men can do,
Thou shalt thine onward course pursue—
Land of the Setting Sun.

I see,— in dreams, I see, smile not,—
A nation great, a nation good!
An universal brotherhood!
And kings of men—all born of thee,

What matter if I pass away
And turn to dust as men have done
Through all the years since Time begun?
Thou shalt be great till Time is gray.

WHITHER ?



LIE by a spring, moss-circled,
'Neath the tender skies of June,
While the stars in the rosy east grow faint,
And seaward rides the moon ;
I list to the red-breast's matin,
And the wind in the odorous pines,
Till the shadows melt and out of the east
The sun in glory shines.

Then up, and down by the rivulet,
Free-hearted, my way pursue ;
All things are fresh and beautiful,
All things are strange and new.
I pause by the lichened boulder,
I muse o'er the pebbles white,
While the brook with its drowsy murmur
Thrills and fills me with delight.

Whither ?

The brook becomes a river,
Majestic, proud and strong ;
It flows 'tween banks of osier,
And it murmurs never a song.
Whither, O sullen river ?
(I kneel on the bank and pray.)
Wherefore, O sullen river,
Am I led from the hills away ?

But never, ah ! never an answer
Comes up from the waters gray ;
And I take my staff, and wearily
Pursue my onward way ;
And often, and often, and often
A vision my spirit thrills :
'Tis the crystal spring, moss-circled,
That lies among the hills.



AFTER A TIME.



AFTER a time the clover over
Your head and my head will bud and blow;
After a time from the North a rover


Will come and cover our breasts with snow.
Is it well to waste our lives a-sighing,
While all the world is a-dying, dying?

Southward the swallows go flying, flying,
While the robins desert their nests; and lo!
From the woods comes a sound as of some one
crying:

The snow is falling—the snow, the snow!
The snow that covers neighbors and lovers,
Sisters and brothers!—the snow, the snow!

You turn to me as the world has taught you,—
You turn to me with wondering eyes—
And you are just what I never thought you—
What I never thought you! and I so wise!
Of what is, nothing I hope to know
When the clover over our breasts shall blow.

THE HARVEST.

HEY are gathering, in the harvest
From the fields of green and gold;
The woodland shadows deepen,
And the nights are growing cold;
The birds in hedge and thicket
Are sober now and dumb—
'Tis time we hoisted anchor
And went a voyaging home.

We are tarrying in a stranger land
A stranger band among;
We see few faces that we knew
When you and I were young;
The hearts to ours responsive once
Are pulseless now and dumb,—
'Tis time we hoisted anchor,
And went a voyaging home.

The Harvest.

There's much that's very beautiful
In those sober autumn days,—
In the tints of fields and forests—
In shimmering brooks and bays;
But somehow, all the day long,
We wish that night would come.—
'Tis time we hoisted anchor,
And went a voyaging home.



WHERE COW BELLS RING.



HIS way and that on the busy street
I hear the tramp of hurrying feet,
But I never hear the music sweet
Of the cowbells ringing, ringing!

And I never hear the babble of brooks
In the meadowlands or the pasture nooks,
Scattered like pebbles in these are books,
Nor the songs the birds are singing

But sometime, perhaps, I'll go away,
May be, on crutches, and grizzled and
gray,
From this Winter land to the land of May,
Where always the birds are singing ;
Where this tired feeling is quite unknown
In heart and brain and muscle and bone,
And never is heard a sigh or a moan,
And the cow bells are always ringing.

THRENODY.



OW the rose blushes that above his head
Opens its petals to the dews of heaven,
But from my buried rose the blush is fled,
And unto marble my sweet rose is wed,—
How dost thou slumber in thy clay-cold bed,
Rose, from my bosom rudely, rudely
riven?

Tell me, oh rose! Is it of happiness
Thy blushes are conceived? Is it of sorrow?
Tell me, oh rose! Methinks the answer is,
“I blush to feel the south-wind’s ardent kiss,
But I shall die and be forgot I wis—
But I shall die and be forgot to-morrow!”

Threnody.

To-morrow? Ah, to-morrow!
For this consuming sorrow,
What nepenthe can I borrow
From to-day or from the days to be?

None!

For laughing give me crying:

None!

For living give me dying:
From the light, O, let me hide me in the cloud
that mantles thee!

Like a mirror the breast of the sea is,
Yet in the dark caverns below
Are boiling and seething the caldrons
Of woe, of unspeakable woe!

As deep is the sky as thine eye was,
As sweet is the wind as thy breath,
But who will resolve to me why 'twas
That one smiled and one laughed at thy death?

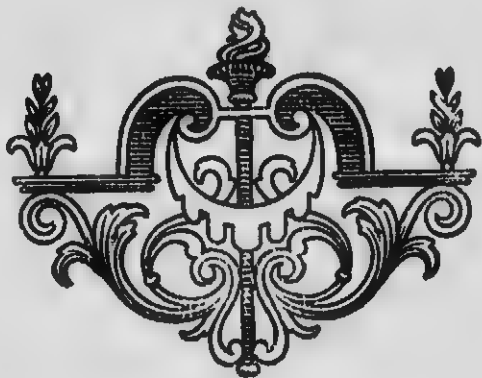
We are but atoms in this world of sense—
We are but leaves upon the winds of
time—

Threnody.

We crumble dust-like—we are hurried hence
By blasts untoward—and the pantomime—

The mocking pantomime of our existence ends.
—Around the world a funeral train extends
Whose march began when Time its first fruit
bore,

Whose march will end when Time shall be no
more.



WHO PLANTED THE FLOWERS?



WHO planted the flowers that bud and blow
By brookside and hedge in the early
year?"

Little one, really, I do not know—
I had a theory long ago,
But now, the matter is no wise clear.

Little people, the size of my thumb—
Funny people, you well may say—
One with a fife and one with a drum,
I thought, with baskets of flowers would come,
Late in April or early in May:

And over the fields I thought they went,
When all the household was fast asleep—
To gladden the world they were intent—
I thought, from Paradise they were sent,
Some trace of Eden alive to keep.

Who Planted the Flowers.

I thought they planted the flowers that blow
Late in April or early in May :
But now when my head is covered with snow,
I think how little the children know,
Young and careless or staid and gray.



THE OWL.



GRAY owl dwelt in a gray old tower,
And he woke at the stroke of the mid-
night hour,

For so brightly shone the harvest moon
He hardly knew if 'twere night or noon.
He looked in the sky that bent o'erhead,
"Of my kindred, thousands are there," he said,
"And they look at me with their great round
eyes

Those happy owls in the upper skies."
So he wrote a book for his brother owls,
(His scorn was great for all other fowls)
And explained as well as he possibly could,
The ultimate fate of the brotherhood.
His book was used in the schools 'tis said,
Centuries after the owl was dead—
That gray old sage, who when the moon
Shone bright was in doubt if 'twere night or
noon.

AFTER AWHILE.



FTER awhile the flowers will wave,
For Nature is kind—above his grave.

After awhile his head will rest
Upon his mother's loving breast.

After awhile. on fluttering wing
At his head and feet the birds will sing.

After awhile the leaves will fall
Over his form—a kindly pall.

And after awhile the circles small
In the sea of life that were made by his fall

Will cease to exist, from shore to shore
And its face will be calm as it was before.

No more of the world; the world will smile
And grieve as it's wont to do, after awhile.

MY LITTLE MAID OF ACADIE.



I KNEW you when your cheeks were fair
As any rose that bloomed could be,
And your soft eyes were deep as were
The skies that bent o'er you and me;
How played the June winds with your hair;
How sought your lips the honey-bee :
How lithe your form—how blithe your air,
My little maid of Acadie.

You sang ; and on the boughs that bent
Above our path, the little birds
Would cease their songs—they seemed intent
To catch the meaning of your words :
You laughed ; the very flowers would smile,
To hear a laugh so full of glee :—
'Tis pity they were dumb the while,
My little maid of Acadie.

My Little Maid of Acadie.

My little maid of Acadie.

"Of all God's world's the best is this !"
(So once you whispered, love, to me
When overflowed your heart with bliss :)
'Twas a sweet world through which we went.
(A sweeter I've no wish to see,)
Thank heaven for all the joys it's lent,
My little maid of Acadie.

Your eyes grow misty as a thought
Of what has been, and yet may be,—
How tears the years have often brought,
And oft may bring to you and me :
By no means wise are they who dream
That heaven delights a wreck to see,
And time, the thief, is not supreme,
My little maid of Acadie.



QUESTIONS.



HENCE comes the gossiping wind?

And tell me whither it flies?

Softly it talks to the pine tree,

And as softly the pine tree replies.

When the wind forgets to sorrow

With the pine tree in its woe,

Shall I forget how you sorrowed

With my sorrows long ago?

Comes up from the beach a murmur

A murmur low and faint—

Why should the waves that the sun shines on

Pour forth an endless plaint?

When the waves forget the wrecks

They have hurled to the depths below,

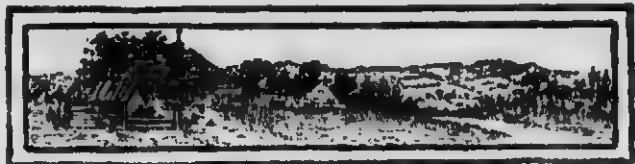
Shall I forget how you sorrowed

With my sorrows long ago?

Questions.

From the meadows that stretch behind us
Comes the hum of a thousand bees,
And the scent of acres of clover,
But there's sadness in all of these?
When the bee forgets the clover,
And the clover forgets to blow,
Shall I forget how you sorrowed
With my sorrows long ago?

They go in sad procession
To God's Acre on the hill!
Why should I tremble and grow cold?
And why should my heart stand still?
When the tide to the Acre of God
Shall cease its constant flow,
I may forget how you sorrowed
With my sorrow long ago.



UNDER THE SNOW.



NDER the snow the roses lie,
And violets blue as the summer sky,
They reck not how fiercely the North
winds blow,
Under the snowdrifts, under the snow.

Under the snow the mountain streams
Babble all day of their nightly dreams,
Whisper and frolic as on they go,
Under the snowdrifts, under the snow.

Under the snow in bowers of moss,
The Dryads are weaving their robes of floss,
Robes that in summer will sparkle and glow,
Under the snowdrifts, under the snow.

Under the snow are voiceless lips,
And tender eyes in dark eclipse,
And hearts that are pulseless, yet I know,
A spring is coming to melt the snow.

IN CHILDHOOD.



WAS in my childhood I heard the song,
And this its echo seems to be, --
"What is, is right, and what is, is wrong,
And it's all a mystery, friend, to me!"
We look away across the sea,
And we for something pray and long,
While our ships go down in the depths,
and we
Are lulled to dreams by an idle song.

"What is, is right and what is, is wrong!"
Friend, by the wayside, list to me;
Do you hear in the woods the robin's song?
Do you see the bloom on the apple tree?
Do you hear the laugh of the rippling sea?
And see the light where the children throng
Do you hear the hum of the wandering bee
And can you think, what is is wrong?

AD EXTREMUM.



MONG men in days gone by
Oft perplexed and vexed was I,
By the questions they discussed
While they grovelled in the dust.
We came from whence? And where go we?
We journey hence! O, answer me,
Through all the ages journeying on
Are they who from our lives have gone?
Or rest they as the children rest
Upon a mother's tender breast?

By my cottage thatched with grass,
Pause, O traveller, as you pass;
Listen! it is not the sigh
Of the breeze that wanders by;
Listen! it is not the note
From some forest warbler's throat,
Nor is it the brook that sings
Where the birch its branches swings,
Nor is it the hum of bees,
But my voice in all of these.

Ad Extremum.

Winter's snowdrifts, Summer's rain,
Spring's sweet blossoms, Autumn's grain;—
Through the ages yet to be
I am they and they are me.

In this world of constant change
You call me dead ! 'tis passing strange !
The withered leaf by tempests tost
But to the parent bough is lost ;
It still exists, though by the tide
'Tis swept across an ocean wide,
And though absorbed by some strong root
It lives in leaf, or flower, or fruit.

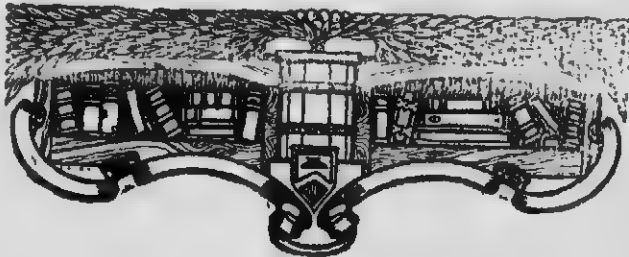
Am I less than leaf or flower,
The plaything of an idle hour ?
No ! they live and so live we—
I in them and they in me.

You who loved me, love me yet,
Take this spray of mignonette
And this pensive violet,
And these creamy blooms of clover

Ad Extremum.

That the wild bee hovers over ;
Place them on your breast and lo,
There as in the long ago
I shall rest, your faithful lover.

Think not that my eyes are blind,
Think not that my lips are dumb ;
Of my life, that's left behind,
O, how small the sum !
Nearer, now are you to me
Than of old ; 'tis yours to be
Nearer still in time to come.



NOTHING TO US.



It is nothing to us whose heads are
sprinkled
With the snows of three-score how
the years unfold;
Comes never a flush to the cheek that is
wrinkled
And never a throb to the heart that is cold;
We are done with Love and its strange, wild
madness—
It fled with our Youth and returns no more;
We are done with Achievement's pride and
gladness,
With all of the butterfly follies of yore.

Yet sometimes to us, whose heads are sprinkled
With the snows of three score, comes a
dream of old:
The moon never laughed and the stars never
twinkled
As they twinkled and laughed when our
pranks they beheld;

Nothing to Us.

Ah, Mary, and Sarah, and Lucy, and Helen;
Their slumber is sweet though the grave-
yard is cold;
And the W. C. U. is the refuge of Ellen—
She's forgot all the butterfly follies of old.

We thought 'twould be grand on the streets
to be noted,
To own acres and bank stock, and ship-
ping and such;
To see our remarks in the newspapers quoted—
To be called Judge or Governor—no mat-
ter which;
But fame, gold and love are quite prone to
deceive us
And leave us despairing and heartsick and
sore,
And therefore such trifles no longer shall
grieve us,
We'll forget all the butterfly follies of yore.



THE CITY OF SLEEP.



IN the City of Sleep on the hill
Fall the sunbeams, the star gleams and
showers,
Comes never a vision of ill,
And the years glide away like the hours ;
For the sleepers reck not of the strife,
The heartaches and trials that fill
To o'er flowing the goblet of life,
In the City of Sleep on the hill.

There the day-time^l and night-time are one,
The seasons of blossom and snow,
The light of the moon and the sun,
The gladness of earth and its woe ;
We may garland their pillows with flowers
And water with tears, if we will,
But they heed not such sorrows as ours
In the City of Sleep on the hill.

The City of Sleep.

O, the City of Sleep on the hill
Is a city of refuge for all
Who, weary with struggle and ill,
By the wayside are ready to fall ;
For rest is the cry of the world—
A cry that has never been still,
And "Rest" has her banner, unfurled
O'er the City of Sleep on the hill.



*MY LITTLE GIRL WITH THE GOLDEN
HAIR.*



HE lamps are lit, for the day is done—
'Tis hours since the sea engulfed the
sun ;

The tides come in with a sullen wail,
And the leaves are falling, yellow and pale ;

The windows rattle in every blast,
And through the sky the clouds fly fast.

*Hark ! a light footstep on the stair !
'Tis my little girl with the golden hair !*

Out on the black, black night I peer—
O dying heart ! O dying year !

There's a gleam of light on the narrow street,
That echoes the tread of passing feet ;

My Little Girl with the Golden Hair.

Youth with its hope and joy is there,
And Age with its pain and grief and care ;

*But list ! through the hall a fairy flies !
'Tis my little girl with the tender eyes.*

Idly I tap my window pane,
That is seamed and scarred by the Autumn
rain ;

I glance at the pictures on the walls,
And each a dream of the past recalls ;

I study the embers burning low,
And they tell me tales of long ago.

*Hush ! What is that ? O heart, rejoice !
I hear my little girl's bird-like voice !*

Never again up that creaking stair,
Will trip my child with the golden hair ;

Through my door no more in quaint disguise,
Will peep my child with the tender eyes ;

My Little Girl with the Golden Hair.

And never again will my heart rejoice
At the sound of my darling's bird-like voice.

Though great thy loss, O heart of mine !
Greater losses have been than thine.



A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.



HUNDRED years ago the birds
Were singing as they sing now,
The fields were flecked with flocks, the
flowers

Were springing as they spring now !
Men toiled as men are toiling now
And moiled as men are moiling now,
And groped as men are groping now,
And hoped as men are hoping now
And died as men are dying.

One lived for love and one for gold,
And dreams of fame beguiled one!
One was a monarch where he dwelt,
Another a reviled one!
The moon looked down the tale to hear
That still deceives the maiden's ear,
And slander wove its web of slime
Round many a heart in that old time;—
Ah, how the years are flying.

A Hundred Years Ago.

A hundred years ago the graves
That mourners wet with weeping
The plough hath furrowed; with their dead
All those who wept are sleeping;
Are sleeping as we soon shall sleep,
No more to laugh, no more to weep,
No more to hope, no more to fear,
No more to ask Why are we here
A weary and a sighing.



"WHO CAN CONTROL HIS FATE?"



MINUTES and hours, from day to day,
And months and years move proudly on;
The generations pass away
Like dews beneath the noontide sun.
No matter if we walk or run,
The goal is reached or soon or late!
His hand is steel, his heart is stone,—
Unswerving is the Will of Fate!

Our souls are free though prison gate
Our steps obstruct, that fain would stray :—
In perfect peace we watch and wait,—
December grows as green as May.
Oh, friends beloved ! the skies grow gray,
But hearts like ours are e'er elate !
Trill, unseen birds your roundelay !
Unswerving is the will of Fate !

"Who Can Control His Fate?"

Trill, unseen birds your roundelay !

We shut our eyes and see your plumes !
And 'neath the snowdrifts, flowers of May

Load all the air with their perfumes.

The violet and the mayflower blooms

Where streams in icy fetters wait ;

What, what to us are winter's glooms ?

Unswerving is the will of Fate.

Envoy.

My friends, the world's love or its hate,

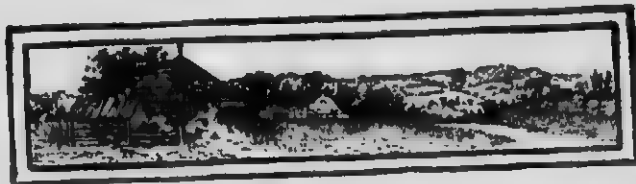
Can never pierce the fettered tomb !

Unswerving is the will of Fate !

The rich, the poor, the small, the great,

Like us, as well, might calmly wait

The consummation of their doom.



AN OLD SONG.



IS but the refrain of a song they sung
When I was a boy by my mother's
knee ;

Yet when I hear it I grow young :—

"To-morrow our sorrow will buried be."

The brook flows on o'er its pebbly bed—

The robin chirps in the cherry tree,

And the white clouds sing in the skies o'erhead,

"To-morrow our sorrow will buried be."

And my mother stands by my side again—

And my brothers—they're dead—again I
see,

And I hear as I walk through the ripening
grain,

"To-morrow our sorrow will buried be."

An Old Song.

O, path that winds by the hills and woods,
O, brook that wanders away to the sea!
O, pleasant meadows! sweet solitudes!
"To-morrow our sorrow will buried be."—

Roused from my dreams by the midnight
chimes
I pause, and listen, and muse, ah me!
And my heart is thrilled by those quaint old
rhymes—
"To-morrow our sorrow will buried be."

To-morrow! the grass will grow green where
we lie!
To-morrow! unheeded life's turmoil, and
we
No more with clasped hands will cry with a
sigh,
"To-morrow our sorrow will buried be."



AN AUTUMN WALK.



THE brown leaves lie a hundred deep,
The bare boughs toss their arms on
high,

There is a cold look in the sky,
And fierce winds over the woodlands sweep.

The fields are black and bare and gray,
The flowers upon their stalks are dead,
And southward all the birds are fled,
Save lingering here and there a jay.

From dark till dawn and dawn till dark
I hear the sullen waves complain,
They beat the rugged shores in vain,
Of rocks, piled high and grim and stark.

Rest well, O flowers whose day is dead !
Rest well, O leaves that lowly lie !
And 'neath a clearer, warmer sky,
Sing on, ye birds, that hence have fled.


An Autumn Walk.

To other forms of life, ye give
A place in Nature's wond'rous range,
And in the endless path of change,
Though fled or dead, ye come and live.

The daisy blossoms in a rose,
Perhaps, when dawns another spring,
For Nature cares for everything
That on her bosom finds repose



THE LIGHTHOUSE LIGHT.

HE lighthouse light gleams o'er the bay
Where all the stars reflected lie,
And 'gainst the shingle, worn and gray,
The flashing ripples softly sigh :
And every breeze that wanders by
A story tells of tropic May.

Southward we turn our eyes away :
The mists enshroud those pennons white !
O ships of ours ! O grand array !
Swift as an arrow is your flight !
But for your coming, day and night,
We vainly watch and vainly pray.

They tell us of a far Cathay,
Where Summer reigns from year to year ;
Where age by age, as day by day,
Youth's fountain bubbles fresh and clear,
Let us forget ;—that land is near—
We touch the border of Cathay.

AT FERNHILL.



O those who in this silent city dwell,
All seasons are alike, the budding rose,
Summer's soft sunshine, the refresh-
ing rain,
The birds whose songs make glad each hill
and dell ;
The purple daybreaks, eves like golden
grain,
Awake no throb within the breasts of those
Who have their dwelling here ; nor joy nor
pain
Comes when the flowers come, nor when
fall the snows.
The vain ambitions, idle jealousies,
That elsewhere torture and perplex the soul,
The misadventures that confound the wise,
The far recedence of Ambition's goal :—
They vex not here, for here all troubles cease—
City of Silence and Eternal Peace.

THE DYING YEAR.



H, Yeare that att the noone of night
With all the buried Yeares will ly,
I hayled thy coming with delight,
But att thy going scarcely breathe a sigh.
For thoue, oh Yeare, to mee hast brought
Of bale, good store, of pleasance nought,
Thou'st seen my loved ones dy, grow cold e,
Thou'st seen, but that neede not be tolde,
How I am growing gray and olde !
The sweetest Floweret that the Sun
In all hys course e'er shone upon,
Thou from mine arms didst rudely bear,
Her haunts I haunt, she ys not there:—
Her hands thys graceful trellis twined,
Her voice! 'tys but the evening wind!
Her step! ah me, I never knewe
Her step, so lyke the falling dewe!
What hast thoue done, oh Yeare, oh Yeare,
That I for thee should shed a tear?

The Dying Year.

Go, Yeare! for thee the grave doth ope!
For thee there is nor fear nor hope!
Though many wrongs, me thou hast done,
I do forgyve them every one!
I do forgyve thee! and may I,
Poor wretched sinner, by and by
So be forgyven, for I knowe
How prone my footsteps are to goe
Where they should not. But soon to me
Ye clod shall as a brother be,
And I, oh Yeare, shall sleep with thee.



THE FIRST SNOW.



ALL gently on the ashen leaves,
And gently on the withered flowers,
That calm and sweet may be their sleep
Through winter's long and songless
hours.

That calm and sweet their sleep may be
Till burst is winter's icy chain,
When birds shall sing and flowers spring
And forests smile in leaf again.

Ah, ashen leaf and withered flower !
Ah, falling snow so cold and white !
Ah, ashen heart and withered brain !
Ah, Fate transforming day to night !

How oft our spring time we recall !
How oft the snow fall on our hearts !
Since then no flowers beside our paths
Have smiled—our winter ne'er departs.

The First Snow.

But spring will come, though long delayed,
To you and me, with leaf and bloom ;
In dreams we feel its balmy breath
From 'yond the gateway of the tomb.



HAVE I DONE WELL?



YOU will not see me when the sun goes
down,
Nor when the moon beams o'er the
Silent Town ;
But you will ask, (Was that a tear that fell ?)
Have I done well ?

The question will arise, and many a time,
Evoked by something else than this poor
rhyme—
Morn, noon and night—the why I need not
tell—
Have I done well ?

Have I done well ? Alas, we all do ill !
Men are but mortal ; look where'er we will !
The question strikes all hearts like funeral bell,
Have I done well ?

A PROPHECY.



HE birds make music in the trees,
The breezes babble as they pass,
And dreamily drone the vagrant bees
Among the blossom-haunted grass.

The sunbeams shimmer on flower and leaf,
A band of gold 'girds sea and sky,
But Time steals on, the thief, the thief!
And one must live and one must die!

You'll hear the birds, the flowers you'll see,
But they no more your breast will thrill,
And oh, how long the hours will be
When this poor heart is cold and still!"

'Twas spoken with a prophet's tongue!
Years languish, and the world grows gray!
Ah, never since such songs are sung
As were that day—as were that day.

II

Sonnets.

Sonnets.

I.

A QUAIN inscription of the olden time
In letters rudely carved and choked with
moss—

*"Our fears are pueryle, our truste sublime,
Lyfe ys not gayne, and death, yt ys not losse."*

Above the sleeper bloomed the fern and rose,
As if kind Nature would such trust repay,
And there at morn, at noon, at evening's close,
The birds sang many a sweet and soothing
lay,

And there we fondly thought the orb of day,
The moon, the stars, looked down with
kindest ray,

Ah, heart at rest, beyond the reach of ill!

Ah, slumber blest, and peace without annoy!
Not vain thy quest to reach the Heavenly Hill,
The Sunlit Land, the Emerald Fields of Joy.

Sonnets.

II.

UPON the beach I walked at eve alone,
And listened to the moaning of the sea,
And watched the sails that in the moonlight shone
At the horizon ; Unto me
There came a voice, as from below the waves,—
“The less’ning sail will soon be seen no more,
“And as I sweep thy footprints from the shore,
“Time mosses o’er a world of unknown graves,
“And it is well. If men could not forget.
“With phantoms all the earth would peopled be,
“The ghosts of buried joys their hearts would
fret,—
“A flood of tears, like blood, would drown the
sea.
“Rail not at time—the healer of thy woes—
“As of those thou hast forgotten, shall be thy last
repose.”

III.

WHEN Enon died, I cried, “O heart, for
thee
Nor sun shall shine, nor flower e’er bloom again!”
When Enon died, I cried, “As falls the rain

Sonnets.

Shall fall my tears through all the years to be !"
But as he faded in men's thoughts, in mine
The recollections of the past grew gray :—
Doth it disturb that long, long sleep of thine
That thou art thus forgotten ? Enon, say !
I see the white sailed ships go down the Bay,
Of warning lights I catch the ruddy gleam :
Upon my pillow wearily I lay
My aching head, and through the night I dream
Of ships dismasted, that the ocean plough,
Lost and forgotten, Enon, as art thou.

IV.

SO you and I, with all our joys and sorrows,
Will never meet in this wide world again !
We can anticipate no glad to-morrows,
And no to-morrow's mingled grief and pain.
'Tis true, alas ! I know how vain, how vain
Our aspirations are ! how vain our fears !
In life's stern battle see the maimed and slain,
And who for such have time for sighs or tears ?
Well, it is well ! The world goes over and over,
And we who smile to-day, to-morrow sigh ;
A marble monument, or a bit of clover,

Sonnets.

No matter which, when 'neath at rest we lie.
At rest, at rest ! and echo answers "blest !"
Blessed are we, for we at last find rest.

V.

IT may be thought my life hath been of sorrow
Full to the brim ! Of joy I've had my
share ;
Of grief I borrow, and of joy I borrow,
Of hope I borrow, and of blank despair !
To me the sunshine is a cure for care,—
To me the storm brings darkness and distress ;
The garb that Nature wears I always wear,
Give love for love, for hate no tithe the less.
I, with the happy-hearted have been glad,
And with the sorrowing I have sorrowed too ;
They dream who say that I am always sad,
Or that my joys are overpoised by woe !
But somehow we forget our joys while sorrows
cling,
And through the years we writhe beneath their
sting.

Sonnets.

VI.

IN years ago did glint about her hair
The sunshine sweet, and in her tender eye
The violet blossomed ; does it blossom there,
And with her cheek do envious roses vie ?
I do not know ! 'Twas once a thought of mine
That when she spoke the birds did gailier sing—
That when she smiled the sun did brighter smile—
That when she laughed all seasons were like
spring.

Ah me ! To me no season e'er can bring
The purple glories of the days of old—
The birds that sang as they no more can sing—
The morning's crimson, or the evening's gold !
The ear is deaf except to discord sore,
And beauty charms the eye no more, no more !

VII.

WHERE is the King to whom his people
bowed
With heads uncovered as his chariot passed ?
And where the multitude that proclaimed aloud
That long as time his name and fame should
last ?

Sonnets.

The King is dead long since, and in thy vast
And silent halls, Oblivion, his name and fame
are cast.

Where is the multitude? All save one
Of that great throng are with the mouldering
leaves

Of long forgotten Autumns. Their work was done
When death stepped forth and gathered up his
sheaves.

The one that lives beside his doorway sat
And to his children crooned a tender lay :—
By them 'twas treasured sacredly, and in that
One song he lives, and shall live on for aye.

VIII.

UPON the shivering fields the snow falls down,
Oh shivering fields that late held holiday!
And by the wayside wave the branches brown
Of apple trees, late decked with blossoms gay.
Spring, Summer, Autumn! Ye have passed
away,

As in a little while, we too shall pass,
And we shall be forgotten, as are they,

Sonnets.

Last Summer's buds, and flowers, and leaves, and
grass.

They come not back, and never more shall we,

So let us make the best of this, our brief
Existence. Others there will be

To bear our burden, be it joy or grief.

Life is a fountain in a desert waste :—

To drink thy fill, oh friend, make haste, make
haste.

IX.

WHAT is our life? A weary journey down
An unknown path with many pitfalls
strown—

A stranger at the outset, scholar or clown,

Finds as he nears the end that he is still alone.

For our companions of the morning fall

Beside the path, to journey on no more

E're noontide, and when night spreads out her pall

Our later friends are lost or gone before,

Lost in the sunlight—lost beneath the moon—

Vanished like mist to never rise again—

Gone like the notes of some forgotten tune—

Sonnets.

Of some old melody the sweet refrain.
As life's beginning is, so is the end,
So guard thy footsteps and thy heart, my friend.

X

A QUIET valley with green hills surrounded—
Our friends, the brooks, with willows over-
hung ;
By these green hills and the blue sky was bounded
Our little world when you and I were young.
What tales were told us and what songs were sung
What dreams we dreamed, and what wild hopes
we nurst
On the far slopes to sight what castles sprung,
And through the clouds what glorious visions
burst !
As time rolled on our world grew wider, wider,
And you lay down and died, long years ago ;
I railed at Fortune then,—but can I chide her ?
For you, oh friend, no doubt 'twere better so,—
For what have I met since, but pain and
sorrow,
Grief for the past, and doubt about the
morrow.

Sonnets.

XI.

THE leaves grow green on every shrub and tree,
And meek-eyed flowers are seen among the
freshening grass,
The fields are furrowed, as with waves the sea,—
The world grows young, but I, alas, alas,
Grow older, older as the seasons pass.
Oh, palsied heart, and hand that's lost its cunning!
Eyes that grow dim, and dimmer day by day!
Oh stream of life through cheerless deserts running!
Oh, sunshine sweet that's shut from me away!
But such the common lot! So hath fate decreed it!
The staff we lean on breaks when most we need it,
And all our golden idols turn to clay,
They turn to clay, and mock our child-like trust,
While glittering phantoms, grasped, resolve to dust.

Sonnets.

XII.

THE dove returns unto its parent nest,
And love burns bright where once its embers
paled ;
The breezes whispered where the tempests
wailed,
And wintry fields I see with verdure drest !
Mayhap the soul, that here is sore distress,
Will find surcease of sorrow in the land
That lies beyond the sea ! Our brows are
fanned
At times by airs that murmur : "Here is rest !"
Rest for the weary heart and weary brain—
And life for hope, by fate untoward slain.
Oh, questioning heart ! the fields that stretch away
From the white beaches of the silent sea
Are lit by Spring-tide suns from day to day,
And age to age, through all eternity.

XIII.

WATCHED by the stars, the sleeping May-
flower lies
On craggy mountain slope, in bushy dell,
Beneath the red and yellow leaves that fell

Sonnets.

Ere Autumn yielded to bleak Winter's reign ;
But when at Spring's approach the Winter flies,
Our Mayflower wakes, and buds, and blows again.
Queen of the forest ; flower of flowers most sweet,
Delight and wonder of a thousand eyes—
Thou dost recall a day that flew too fleet—
A hope that perished in a sea of sighs.
We all have hoped for that which might not be ;
But thou, forbiddest that we despair ;
After the Winter, Spring doth welcome thee,
And, ever hoping, we may conquer care.

XIV.

THE twilight shadows creep along the wall,
Without, the sobbing of the wind I hear,
And from the vine-clad elm that marks the
mere
The ivy leaves in crimson eddies fall.
Deeper and deeper grow the shades of night,
And, gazing in the fire, to me appears
The form of one departed with the years—
The buried years of hope, and faith and light.
“Oh, that those lips had language”—would they
tell

Sonnets.

The old, old story of the by-gone days—
Ere on our heart the blighting shadow fell,
And we henceforward followed parted ways?
I ask, but as I ask the embers die—
The vision fades—and answer none have I.

XV.

IN the dim distance, lo, the moon declines—
Astarte brightens in the purple sky;
The south winds woo in whispers soft the pines,
The slumberous pines in murmurs weird reply.
Thou, from afar, perchance, doth watch with me
The full-orbed moon descending in the sea—
Thou, from afar, may count the stars that beam
Alike on this blue Bay and Jordan's stream,
And thou, perchance, in some half waking dream
Dost hear these whispering winds—these murmuring pines dost see.
Nor time nor space is to kind Nature known—
Nor Past, nor Future,—Now embraces all;—
Her hand doth clasp all men have overthrown
And all that men hereafter shall befall.

Sonnets.

XVI.

A STATELY castle in my dreams I planned,
Which, in a night, reality became ;
The clouds were fretted by its turrets grand,
Its flashing windows put the sun to shame.
Its walls I hung with pictures quaint and rare,
Its floors with carpets from the East I laid,
Here curious books to quell the plaint of care,
And mail-clad statues peering from the shade ;
There fawns surrounded, a cool fountain played,
That lulled the senses with the sound it made ;
And thou wert queen of all the wide domain—
Thou of the laughing eyes and golden hair ;
And Death was dead, and dead the goblin, Pain,—
Life, Love and Joy thy faithful vassals were.

XVII.

A GAIN I dreamed. The night was starless,
cold—
Through devious ways with cautious feet I stept ;
I breathed the odor of some charnel old,
The rain fell down ; I thought the heavens wept ;
But on and on in weariness I crept,—
My hair grew gray with anguish, and how bled

Sonnets.

My heart within thy grip, oh fiend Despair !
For to a tomb by Fate my feet were led,
And on its brazen door thy name I read—
Thou of the laughing eyes and golden hair !
Oh, God, that I had died, my darling, in thy stead,
For I am weary and of little worth !
Then, sweetest pillow for this aching head
Had been thy bosom, oh my mother, Earth.

XVIII.

I DREAM no more of castle or of tomb,
And thou art sad no longer, billowy Sea !
Upon the hills the Mayflowers bud and bloom,
And birds make vocal every hedge and tree,
And I rejoice with Nature, unto me
The throbbing pulse of youth doth Spring
restore;
It is enough, oh heart of mine, to be,
And feel as I had thought to feel no more.
The sunshine falls, where shadows lately fell ;
I hear the merry music of thy voice,
And oft and oft I whisper, it is well,

Sonnets.

And in the fulness of my heart rejoice
That thou my pilgrimage shouldst longer
share,
Thou of the laughing eyes and golden hair.

XIX.

(William Cullen Bryant.)

WITH eyes suffused and heart dissolved with
sorrow,

How often have I fled the realms of sleep,
And sought, not vainly, from thy page to borrow
That which forbids or eye or heart to weep !
Thy Thanatopsis ! fraught with tenderest feeling,
Is like a June breeze to the ice-bound heart ;
To us, thy humble followers, revealing

The sage, the seer, the poet that thou art,
Still roll "The Ages," still "Green River" flows,
And odorous blossoms load the "Apple Tree,"—
Into "The Lake" still fall the fleecy snows,
And Nature everywhere doth speak of thee.

Oh, for a poet's tongue to name thy name !
But does it matter ? Thine is deathless fame.

Sonnets.

XX.

WHO builded here this snowy architave?
Who in the Autumn scattered here his gold?
Who when the Year was young did till the
mould
And plant with blossoms this secluded grave?
Child, I recall how ere thou fledst away
Thou wert a dreamer, and thy world didst fill
With forms unseen by other eyes, and they
Were thy beloved companions. Do they still
About thee gather? Sow they here the
flowers,
Daisies, and buttercups, and violets sweet,
And the green mosses? And when Winter
lowers
Raise they those marbles at thy head and feet?
Canst thou not answer? Then must I declare
Thou wert less real than thy fancies were.

XXI.

FROM quiet dreams thou biddest me arise,
Oh, sleepless watcher, melancholy Sea!
And at thy summons, 'neath the midnight skies
My feet are led, and I commune with thee.

Sonnets.

Canst thou reveal of life the mystery,
And canst thou look beyond the gates of death?
Canst thou of what shall be unfold the history?
Is it like all we know, a dream, a breath,
A flower that in unfolding perisheth?
The waves fling back thy answer—but in vain
Thy language to interpret I endeavor—
The stars go down—behold, the moon doth wane,
And they shall rise, and she shall wax again,
And thou these sullen shores shall, beating, plain
forever!

XXII.

WHILE I, forgotten by the world, will lie
By these gray cliffs, to clod and clay a
brother,
Above me bending still the glorious sky—
Around me blooming flowers of various dye,
And on the breeze, from thee, perchance a sigh
At times may float, oh, thou who art my mother,
And thou my mother art, mysterious Sea
That mocks at Time and triumphs o'er decay!
Unrest hath been thy legacy to me—
To me, a shadow, passing soon away!

Sonnets.

Where is the Fountain of Eternal youth ?
Why should we die before the goal is gained ?
Why are earth's promises devoid of truth,
And why is life a tale of purpose unattained ?

XXIII.

SWEET were the songs that thou didst sing, oh
Sea.

When I was young, who now am old and gray,
And weird the stories that thou told'st to me
As on yon beetling crag through the still night
I lay.

A tender mother wert thou then—to thee
Do I return ! Oh, take me to thy breast !
Clasped in thine arms how deep my sleep shall be—
How strangely quiet my long sought for rest !
Then, quenched the fire that burns, and closed the
quest

That wearies heart and brain—a slave no more,
What will it matter how, or east or west,
Or north or south, they babble on the shore ?
What will it matter, when returned to thee
Thou dost caress thy wayward child, oh Sea !

Sonnets.

XXIV.

"TO-DAY a captive—yesterday a King!"
How laugh the gods, beholding from afar
The causes that conspire to make or mar,
Our fortunes! Up on venturous wing
One scars, and holds communion with the
stars—
He spurns the dust—he Cæsar is, or Mars—
But, one brief day, and what remains of him?
A stranded wreck—a name unhonored, dim.
The Fates amuse themselves with men's
affairs—
With men's ambitions, hopes and fears they play—
They weave around them webs of joys and
cares—
They smile to see them smile, grow wrinkled, gray:
Well may they laugh, and we as well as they
At what to-morrow is the idol of to-day.

XXV.

O Sea, that to these gray and solemn shores
Dost pour thy plaint through all the circling
years;
I would that to my ever listening ears

Sonnets.

Some spirit might translate thy language ! Roars
The wave that spends its force against the rocks
That its assaults deride ; a giant's pain
It voices ! Soft dost thou complain
By pebbly beach to Summer's fields and flocks.
Tell'st thou of cities hid beneath thy breast ?
Of famed Atlantis, known in story only ?
Of sepulchres innumerable, where rest
The wrecks of ages, peacefully and lonely ?
Tell why thou plainest, melancholy sea !
And the sea answers, Hush, it may not be.

XXVI.

THEY come again—again they stand beside me,
The dear companions of departed hours !—
Who through the deserts volunteered to guide ye,
From the Lost Land of sunshine and of flowers ?
Daisy and Marguerite, Violet and Lily,
With blue and black eyes—tresses brown and
gold ;
Pale will those cheeks grow in this climate chilly,
Your steps grow weary and your hearts grow
cold.
Tis but the story men have often told—

Sonnets.

Shadows ye are, and phantoms of the mind !
They are transformed that haunt me—gray and
old,

Perhaps earth's joys and griefs have left behind.
Into the dreaming ear the angels sing
Only one song—of sunshine and of spring.

XXVII.

ANOTHER mile stone on life's broad highway
I leave behind me, and the noon is past ;
Not here, as late, my wandering eyes survey
The fields aflame with all the blooms of May !
The flowers are dead—the skies are dull and gray—
Before me sleeps the sea, mysterious and vast !
—The Sea, the Sea o'er which the bark hath passed
Of many a friend whose footsteps reached its shore
Ere I a glance upon its breast had cast—
From which the voyager returns no more !
I think the dreams of savage and of seer
Cannot be idle;—that the land that lies
Beyond, hath rest for those that rest not here,
And joy for those whom joy the world denies.

Sonnets.

XXVIII.

NO matter if we rest, where all is quiet,
Birds singing round us, flowers about us
spread,
Or if, above the waves of Ocean riot,
And tempests gather, with their portents dread ;
One day the Sea shall liberate its dead,—
One day, some day, at God's divine command ;—
So why lament that thou art buried
Just off the storm lashed shores of Newfoundland ?
Alike are storm and sunshine unto thee,
And till we meet are they alike to me ;
Alike to me the morning and the night time,
Alike to me the rainbow and the rain ;
For passed with thee away of life the bright time,
Whose flowers shall bud and blossom ne'er again.

XXIX.

THE forest stream is choked with yellow leaves,
The birds are silent on the naked bough ;
The flowers are dead,—like some lone spirit
grieves
The wandering winds o'er wastes all barren now.

Sonnets.

Where is the promise of the early year ?

'Twas writ on sand, and by the hours effaced,

Ere to the eager eye the hand was clear

By which the title to our throne was traced.

On, on, from dawn to twilight—on with haste,

Seeking but never finding—dreaming dreams,

Pursuing phantoms through a trackless waste,

Deluded oft by phosphorescent gleams,

Till silence gathers round us like a pall,

And lights expire, and darkness covers all.

XXX.

MAY be when that which we call life is over
We shall awake from dreams to better
things ;—

Unlike the bird that haunts the fern and clover

The eagle pierces heaven with fearless wings.

On mountain summits bubble the clear springs

While in the valleys sluggish waters lie ;—

Star unto star in space unmeasured sings,

And the refreshing rain is from the sky.

Sonnets.

May it not be that some day you and I
From valleys dank shall to the mountains hie ?
Ah, not in vain these hopes and aspirations !
These longings vague, they are not wholly vain !
But step by step, by manifold gradations,
At last the dreamed-of life we may attain.

XXXI.

“**L**OOK at the fragrant fields and orchards !
See

On yonder hills the cattle and the sheep
A grazing ! These,” he said exultingly,
“And everything that lies within the sweep
Of our poor eyes, is mine !”—Next night there came
A stranger to his bedside ; and behold,
Next day he had no title to his lands or herds,
For he was dead !—Men covet, but not their’s is
fame !

Not their’s are titles, lands, or herds, or gold !
We build our nests, and do not they, the birds ?
Then go back to our mother, in whose arms
We rest secure from all mischance—from all the
world’s alarms.

Sonnets.

XXXII.

THE earth is red, and from her bosom cries
To heaven the blood of countless thousands
slain ;

And still the smoke of war defiles the skies,

And still the din resounds across the main !

Ah, self-appointed Nemesis ! Thy wrong

May have been bitter, but One hath said,

" Vengeance is mine," and unto Him belong

The powers usurped by thee ; and on thy head

I question not His vengeance yet shall fall—

Unworthy 'twere a prostrate foe to scourge

And impious 'twere for Heaven's aid to call

When fiends revengeful do the action urge :—

Of all great truths none truer e'er than this,

*Might doth confound itself when base its pur-
pose is.*

XXXIII.

A MOUNTAIN stream was from its channel
turned,

And o'er that channel leaned a blasted oak,

Whose roots, bereft of nourishment, were burned

Sonnets.

And lifeless as its branches. And the croak
Of evil-omened birds was heard at night,
Borne by the echoes from that ragged steep—
The home of tempests, where the lightnings white
From rock to rock, in their mad play, would leap.
This is no idle fancy. *There no bird
Of tender lay was ever heard to sing,
And there, by wooing breeze, were never stirred,
The silken petals of the flowers of Spring.*
Long since I saw that oak and channel dry,
And still in dreams I often pass them by.

XXXIV.

HAST thou the tender eyes and golden hair,
The peachy cheeks and the lips like cherries
red,
The heart that ached o'er tales of sin or care,
To joy, at sight or tone of joyance wed?
Hast thou the traits that rendered thee so dear,
In thy bright morning, which I oft recall?
How long and desolate hath been the year,
Since thou were here, my sunlight and my all!
'Tis vain to question! And the days roll on,
While I sit here in idlsse, by the sea,

Sonnets.

The faith and hope of early manhood gone—
Remembered, only as some melody
We knew in childhood, echoes in our dreams,
While the dead Past a living Present seems.

XXXV.

THOU wert beside me when this song began,
And thou art still beside me, at its close ;—
The sunshine of a life by fate made wan—
In a bleak waste, the only flower, a rose.
Calm be thy way, as is the stream that flows
Through the green meadows near where thou
wert born ;
Thy joys be many—few and slight thy woes,—
For thee may Fortune plant no torturing thorn.
In dreams I see the sunshine in thy hair,
The brighter sunshine in thy laughing eyes ;
In dreams I hear thy unaffected prayer,
Thy trustful prayer—and feel that heaven replies,
God be with thee ! it is my soul's request,
And thine at last be everlasting rest.

Sonnets.

XXXVI.

IF love were love, 'twere sweet for love to live ;
If love were love, 'twere sweet for love to die ;
But love, like water pouring through a sieve,
The sand doth bury, and the fount is dry
Ere we a question ask. And why, ah, why ?
Time flows apace, and we grow wrinkled, old,
But to our idols how we turn and cling !—
What, what is worldly eminence, or gold,
Compared with love, that transitory thing ?
—Ah, locks of gold and lips that spoke of
Spring —
Ah, tender eyes that still upon us gleam—
Ah, soul most pure, and ah, most gentle heart,—
Thou, the possessor, to the mourner art
Only a memory, a dream, a dream.

XXXVII.

TOST by the wind, from its paternal bough
An acorn fell to earth, and over it
The frost-nipt grass and weeds a blanket knit,
And when the King of Ice, with angry sough
Swept o'er the fields, it slept as might a child,

Sonnets.

Securely compassed by its mother's arms ;
Then spring approached with aspect sweet and mild
And verdurous grew the forests and the farms.
An oak sprang up where fell the acorn small,
And in its branches birds did build and sing
A beacon to the traveller—so tall,
Its pleasant shade, a place for tarrying—
A kindly act, however small, may be
Great in results—an acorn, then a tree.

XXXVIII.

BUT for the sunshine and the shades of night,
But for the clouds, the frost, the rain, the
snow,
But for the winds that hither, thither blow,
Earth were a desert lone, in man's despite.
But for the worm that burrows in the ground,
But for the bird that sings at morn and eve,
But for the brooks that with a soothing sound
Patient their way through woods and meadows
weave,
Dead as the moon this world of ours would be—
A nothing floating in immensity.

Sonnets.

This world of ours! One well may smile at the
Assumption! The title is with those,
Whose work preserves it for man's use and he
Their pensioner is where'er he comes or goes.

XXXIX.

LET us go hence! the winter is at hand;
Let us go hence! the skies are dark and dun;
Gray are the woods and gray the meadow land,
Cold are the stars and cold the circling sun.
Our Spring is with the ages that are dead,
Our Summer like a half forgotten dream,
The birds of harvest time afar are fled—
Fled like the bubbles on a rushing stream.
Let us go hence! we've had enough of joy,
We've had enough of sorrow, sin and pain;
All, all are vanities to please a boy
Or force his eyes to well with tears like rain.
Let us go hence! now Winter rules the land;
Clasp thou in thine my feeble, trembling hand.

Sonnets.

XL.

THE woods grow dark, the fields grow brown
and grey,

The skies grow leaden and the clouds grow dun;
The airs grow chillier, despite the sun,
That in yon vault seems to have gone astray.

Who hears of brooks the babble, or the song
Of any bird? The chirp of cricket or the hum of
bees?

All these unto another day belong—

They are our lost, but unforgotten melodies.

The year grows old, and we are growing old!

Clasp thou thy hand in mine, and closer still!

Though shadows deepen we will fear no ill—

Some day the longed-for story will be told!

Some day! some day, sleeping or waking, we

Shall rest serene, where there is "no more Sea."

XLI.

AWHILE ago how green the fields and woods,
Dotted with flowers of every shade and hue—

How cheerful were the mountain solitudes—

The overarching sky, how near, how blue.

Sonnets.

It has receded from Ben Lomond's crown,
From all these hills 'tis very far away ;
And ah, the stars that look so coldly down,
How near they once were! now how distant they!
Of those we loved, the nearest and the best
Have laid them down within the halls of rest,
Leaving us here the Autumn blasts to meet—
To thread these paths with Summer's wreckage
 strown
With eyes grow dim and halting faltering feet—
Thou but for me, me but for thee, alone.

XLII

THE flowers of Spring will never ope again,
Beyond recall are Summer's soberer blooms ;
Where they lie dead falls down the Autumn rain
Just as it falls on long neglected tombs.
Were they worth while? Is it worth while to
live?—
It is worth while, even in Autumn time!—
To reign in one pure heart cannot but give
The humblest life an attribut sublime.
Clasp my hand closer ; Winter comes apace ;

Sonnets.

Clasp my hand closer ; soon the snows will
fall

And of ourselves, and of past seasons, all,
There will remain beneath the sun no trace.
Clasp my hand closer ; then we'll go to rest
Beneath the leaves our feet so oft have pressed.

